

May 20, 2014

To Members of the MI House Health Policy Committee,

RE: SB 690 - Direct Consumer Access to Physical Therapy Services in Michigan

Six months ago, in December 2013, I became a proud graduate of Oakland University's Doctorate of Physical Therapy program. Now, I am a Doctor of Physical Therapy in California. Admittedly, I miss the state I grew up in, and love, but know I have made the right decision. I am writing this letter because a big part of the reason behind my move is because of my desire to work in a direct access state.

I was born and raised in Michigan, became a professional ballet and musical theatre performer, and moved to such places as New York City and Europe. I returned to Michigan at the age of 26 when I stopped dancing, to pursue my second career, and to become a physical therapist. I knew that Michigan had some of the greatest college opportunities not only in the country, but in the world. My brother had already graduated from Kettering University, and my sister from Western Michigan.

I studied at U of M-Flint for undergrad, and attended Oakland University (OU) for PT school. In February I started my first professional job as a PT in San Jose, CA, and couldn't be more grateful for the top-notch education I received while at Oakland. I know I am a step ahead of many other PT graduates, and found it easy to attain my first position.

To reiterate, a large part of the reason why I moved is so I may practice physical therapy in a direct access state; in the way that the OU PT Program (and all MI PT programs) prepare their students to practice. That is, with the ability to see a patient directly, without the delay and expense that is incurred when a consumer must first see a physician - so the physician can then refer the patient to a physical therapist. I see first-hand how beneficial that is in California; for the patient, for the therapist, and for the healthcare system as a whole.

Sadly, this is yet another circumstance in which Michigan is losing some of their best and brightest to other states, when Michigan itself is in dire need of great healthcare professionals. Approximately 20% of my graduating class has already, or intends on leaving the state.

Only Michigan and Oklahoma do not allow citizens to choose to see a physical therapist directly. Michigan citizens deserve the same choice as those citizens in the other 48 states, Washington DC and the US Military. Please don't let this be yet another circumstance in which Michigan is at the bottom of the list. We owe it to our citizens to wake up and join the rest of the country on this matter, for the benefit of everyone involved.

Please Support Direct Consumer Access to Physical Therapy Services in Michigan.

Please VOTE YES on SB 690.

Thank you for your time,

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